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THE  
**HISTORY OF JACK**

AND HIS  
**ELEVEN BROTHERS:**

DISPLAYING THE  
VARIOUS ADVENTURES THEY ENCOUNTERED  
IN  
**THEIR TRAVELS,**

*&c. &c. &c.*

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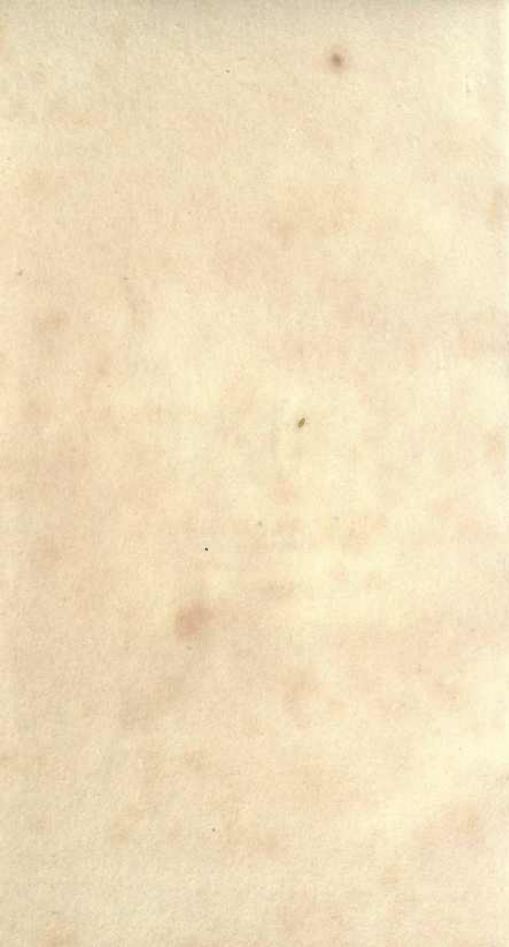
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# Frontispiece!



JACKS ADVICE TO HIS BROTHERS.

Page 10.

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# REPORT OF THE

## COMMISSIONERS OF THE

### LAND OFFICE

AND A STATEMENT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE LAND OFFICE DURING THE YEAR 1871.

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## **ADVERTISEMENT.**

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**IT** is to be hoped that the following pages will prove of essential service to the inquisitive minds of Juvenile Readers, and that the book will not only be admitted into the Seminary, but the Nursery. It aims to improve the mind morally, and to inforce the belief of a Divine Providence, which eventually will reward the virtuous, and punish the obstinate and hardened offender.



**THE**  
**HISTORY OF JACK**  
**AND HIS**  
**ELEVEN BROTHERS.**

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ONCE upon a time a man and his wife had twelve sons and a little daughter, whom the good old couple had brought up in the fear of God and the love of their neighbours, on a few acres of land which they cultivated with their own hands. Having fallen however under the displeasure of the 'Squire, he turned them out of the cottage, plucked up all the flowers in their little garden, and let swine into the farm in which they had lived so many years. The whole parish was sorry for their situation, and relieved them in private, because they were afraid



of the 'Squire, for he was very rich, and never forgave any one that he thought had offended him. But the good curate was not to be deterred by the frowns of any man in the discharge of his duties as an upright Christian clergyman. He gave them a spot of his own farm, though he had a large family himself and a small income. Jack was the name of the eldest son ; he was a good lad from his infancy ; he was never known to tell a lie, speak ill of any one, swear, contradict his parents, fall out with his brothers, strike an animal in a passion or through wantonness, because he said they had feeling, and gratitude as well as ourselves. Every one that knew Jack was fond of him and his brothers, because they followed his example. The twelve sons soon reared a cot for their aged parents on the side of a little hill, near a clear running stream.— It was a pleasing sight to see the whole family at church every Sunday, so neat and clean, and so well behaved in the house of God, that the preacher would sometimes raise his eye off the book to look at them ; as much as to say, these are so many poor lambs, which Heaven has enabled me to snatch from the devouring wolf. Jack and his brothers used to rise



up early, and work very hard in the field all the day, and, when the weather would not permit them to follow their labour, Jack used to teach them to read and write, and the curate used to come and read select passages out of some instructive book which he brought with him; and, as he had a good voice and fine taste, he had the pleasure to find his instructions were well bestowed, and that they all looked up to him with tears in their eyes, which the good old man wiped away with a tender hand. Their little farm might now be called a garden; for every thing they sowed or planted in it shot up and flourished in due season, so that the neighbours used to say the lilies and roses of Daisy Park\* were fairer than any other. Things went on in this happy way for two years and upwards, when a great calamity befel their worthy patron and protector. His house, by an unlucky accident, was set on fire, and all the furniture and books, reduced to ashes in his absence. When he heard of it he fell upon his knees, and returned thanks to God that no lives were lost. He grieved however for his books, because they were the companions of his

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\* The name of the Farm.

solitary moments. This disaster pierced Jack and his family to the heart, because it was not in their power to repair it. A good woman in the parish, however, threw open her door to the pious pastor and his little ones, and divided her loaf and cup of water with them. Jack now became very pensive, and used to walk by himself in the garden. One day he desired all his brothers to meet him at a little distance from the cottage. They all came at the time appointed, anxious to know what it was their eldest brother had to say to them. Having seated themselves arround him, after a pause he began,—“ My dear brothers, you know we are all the offspring of one father and mother, and I need not tell you with what tenderness they have brought us up ; we ought in return to take care of them in their old age : God himself tells us this, and our very hearts tells it. This pious affection is not confined to man ; you know I read in your hearing the other day of a bird that feeds its aged parents when they cannot fly, nor provide for themselves. It has pleased Providence, when the unpitied Squire drove us off our little farm, to grant us another—and when we thought we had not a place to lay our heads, we

found one : such is the goodness of God, that he never deserts those that place their trust in him. Now you know the great calamity that has happened to the good old man that stretched forth his hand and sheltered us from the storm ; (*here they all wept :*) his income is but scanty, and his farm small, and in his present situation he has occasion for it himself. I wish we could think of some means of providing for ourselves ; we can all read and write, and cypher a little too. I am going to propose what you may call a hard thing indeed, but I beg you to listen to it ; I feel myself that it is a hard thing. The few acres we have cultivated, it is true, are sufficient to maintain us all ; but, as I said before, they of right belong to the worthy pastor. We have now got in our harvest, there will be abundance to maintain our father, mother, sister, and some to spare ; we have just thatched the cottage, and laid up wood enough for firing throughout the winter. My advice then is, let us provide ourselves with some bread, and set out immediately in search of some place where the 'Squire may be more tender-hearted, and pass the rest of our days without being a burthen to the best of men, who has a large family him-

self. He will not let our parents want in our absence, and Providence, no doubt, will guide our steps, as he knows the goodness of our intentions, and perhaps we may not be long away. There is another thing, you see our little sister, she is our only sister; she is like a rose-bud, but her beauty may prove her destruction. You know the 'Squire's son ruined a farmer's daughter the other day, and what was the consequence? Why, it broke her aged father's heart, and the beautiful creature herself is now pining in grief like a dying lily." Here they all covered their faces and wept. After a long pause, Tom, the second brother, broke silence, and spake as follows: "My dear brethren, our brother Jack has proposed a very hard task indeed, to leave our aged parents and our little sister; what will our protector say? What will the whole parish say? Can we desert those that cherished us and brought us up in the paths of virtue and industry? Can we leave our little sister behind us, and have but one? Can the shepherd leave the innocent lamb? And what does our brother propose? to seek our fortune! we want no fortune; we are happy already. We are, it is true, a burthen to our good pastor, but we need not be so;

let us work winter and summer, in snow and hail; let us assist him; if we travel from home, what may not befall us? if we fall into a fever, who will attend our sick bed-side?" Jack answered thus: "Providence has protected us to this day in sickness and in sorrow; and I say again, as long as we place our confidence in the All-good and the All-wise, he will not desert us. I shall take care and leave a letter behind, to inform the good pastor of the seasons which make us take such a step. He will pray for us, and he will comfort our parents and watch over our young sister till our return, and, please God, we shall all return with good tidings and have a happy meeting, never to part again." After some farther conversation, they all agreed to follow Jack's advice; and the night of departure was fixed on. Jack wrote the letter as he promised. About midnight, when they found their parents and sister in a deep sleep, each approached according to his age, and kissed them. —Jack's heart almost failed him as he approached his sister, but he concealed his emotions from the rest, and led them forward: many a tear they shed as they passed along, and many a look they cast behind; but Jack comforted them, and the



dawn cheered their hearts. "Come on, boys," said he; "see, the sun begins to smile on us: rest assured that better days await us; we are young, and why should we consume our youth, the most joyous season of life, in tears and sighs? and in tears, too, that flow in vain? There are many tender hearts in the world. We are not bound for the forlorn hope, we are bound for victory." This last word re-echoed from every lip. Having travelled for some time, they sat down under the shade of a spreading oak, ate their breakfast, and slaked their thirst at a little brook that murmured at the foot of the tree. They walked a great way, till at last they came to the meeting of twelve roads. "It is rather extraordinary," says Jack, "that we should come to this place; it looks as if Providence intended that each of us should take one of these roads." The idea of separation could not be listened to. "I tell you," says Jack, "to part with any one is death, but what must it be to part with all? But we must conquer our affections, we must tear those strings asunder that tie our hearts together: listen to my proposal: we have met with nothing remarkable since we set out; now, as I have already said, it looks as if

Providence intended that each of us should take a road, and on this day twelve months, let us meet in this very ring in which we now stand, if alive." After much deliberation, it was agreed to.— Willy was the youngest brother, a fine little white-headed boy. What will become of Willy? was the cry; he is too young to be left alone. Jack was so overcome with this effusion of brotherly love, that it was some time before he could speak, or venture to raise his eyes on them, lest the sight should get the better of his resolution. At length he broke silence and said, "The hardest road has often the softest path-way. Heaven will guard him. His youth and innocence will plead in his favour. Some tender mother, who laments the untimely fate of her son, will take compassion on his helpless years. Remember Moses in the bull-rushes; the child wept, and the daughter of Pharaoh kissed away his artless tears. Be comforted; this day twelve months is the word. You see the sun smiles on us, be of good cheer; God will protect us all!" On which they tore themselves from each other, and each took a road; the fairest was chosen for Willy, and the last glance of every eye was di-

rected to him; they could hear each others cries when they were out of sight of one another. Jack now dropped on his knees, and called on Heaven to direct and protect them all, especially the youngest. Having thus poured out his heart in prayer, he felt himself easier in his mind; he washed his face in the first stream he met, and walked on at an even pace. He had scarce advanced half a mile when he overtook a young man in the dress of a sailor; they entered into the following conversation :

*Sailor.* You seem to have walked a good way, young man, but I hope you are near your journey's end.

*Jack.* I have walked a good way, but as to my journey's end I cannot say; you seem to have travelled a great way too.

*Sailor.* Yes; it is now upwards of six years since I left my native shore, and in that time I have drank deep of the cup of adversity; but, Heaven be praised, it is all over, I hope; if God has reserved one blessing for me, that is enough! If my dear mother is in the land of the living, that is all.

*Jack.* I hope that Heaven has reserved that blessing for so dutiful a son.

*Sailor.* O Sir, my mother was the best hat ever bore that name; my father de-



served me when I hung on her breast; she brought him a handsome fortune, but he spent it all in debauchery. As she was a woman of an excellent education and true piety, she opened a little school in the village; she taught me to read the best books as my memory was good, and as I took a pleasure in reading, every one was pleased with the progress that I made. This increased my thirst for knowledge, and I was resolved to gratify it. I went to sea, and have seen many strange countries.

*Jack.* I suppose you have encountered many a danger, seen the wonders of God in the deep, heard his voice in thunder, and felt his parental protection in the storm.

*Sailor.* I have; and, thanks be to that Divine Power that conducted me through all, I have seen groves of golden oranges; I have been where the myrrh drops its balm; I have seen cloudless skies: but groves of vegetable gold, nor spicy gales, nor cloudless skies, could wean my affections from my own country: I prefer its barren rocks and clouds to all that I have seen.

*Jack.* That is natural; the love of our native country is written in our hearts; we love the air that we first breathed; the pure

stream in which we first saw our infant face, and the wood that furnished us with our little riding switches; nay, the very church-yard that contains the dust of our ancestors.

*Sailor.* True; but let us refresh ourselves at this little alehouse with a glass of our native amber; let us sit beneath this spreading elm. Jack at last consented, as he found himself fatigued. The Sailor called for some bread and cheese, and having related some of his adventures, Jack in his turn told him his short story. The honest tar offered to share his purse with him, and assured him if he accompanied him home, he should want for nothing that his mother's house could afford, if she was living. Jack thanked him in the most affectionate manner, but declared he could not bring himself to accept the offer, as he was afraid he might be a burthen; but said, he should ever think of it with gratitude. They passed that night together, and parted the next morning with tears. Jack had not travelled very far, when he had occasion to put his hand in his pocket, and was quite surprised to find that his twelfth brother, as he called the Sailor, had contrived to slip some money into it; he was struck with so much surprise that for some moments

he stood motionless. "Now!" said he; "perhaps this was all the poor fellow had." He ran after him; "I will take this short cut," on which he flew across a field; here he found a path which led him to a wood, in which he soon lost his way; he attempted to return, but found himself more and more involved; he listened, but heard no voice; he climbed a tree, but saw no dwelling-house; all seemed to be an entire wilderness; at length he thought he heard the noise of a gurgling stream; he followed the sound, till at last he came up to it; he was determined to follow its course. He had not travelled very far on its mossy banks, when he thought he heard something like the *human voice divine*; this revived his drooping spirits; he paused and listened, heard it again, and approached to the place from whence he thought he heard it come. He now heard it distinctly. The birds were caroling their morning hymn to heaven, and were joined in it by the voice which had first arrested his ear; scarce did he breathe lest he should break in on the divine concert, but as soon as it was over he was struck with the appearance of a venerable old man, who entered into the following conversation with him:

*Old Man.* My son, what's brought you hither?

*Jack.* Venerable father, I lost my way in this wood; I did not come with any evil intent to disturb your repose.

*Old Man.* I believe not; a good countenance is a letter of recommendation; walk with me to my cell, and after you have refreshed yourself, we will renew the conversation. The grotto was seated in the bosom of a valley, shaded by lofty pines; the honey-suckle and ivy crept along the walls. The old man immediately spread some bread and fruit on a table curiously formed of divers branches, interwoven with many colours. As soon as they had breakfasted, and returned thanks to heaven, the old man led Jack to a little bower, which he had formed in a beautiful garden, at a short distance from his cell, where the conversation was renewed.

*Old Man.* My son, you must not suppose that I fled to this retirement out of any disgust to the world; no!—if wealth could make a man happy, I enjoyed it. I was born to a plentiful estate; I was married to a woman that brought me a great deal of wealth, but she brought me what wealth can never buy, for she was

the most affectionate wife and the tenderest mother ; I was happy ; my table was always encircled with the learned and the good ; my purse was always open to distress ; I visited want when it could not visit me ! but the date of human happiness is uncertain ; it pleased heaven to call my wife out of this troublesome world, in the twenty-seventh year of her age ; I was then in my thirtieth. I bore this visitation of heaven with resignation ; I bent my neck to the stroke ; it is true I wept, but I wept in secret. She left me only one daughter, the pledge of our mutual love, and the promised image of her mother's beauty. She bequeathed her to me with her last breath, and I watched over the precious legacy with all the solicitude of a tender father ; but the will of heaven be done ! She went out one evening to take a walk—and these eyes never saw her after. Every search was made for her, but in vain, it is probable she fell a prey to some wild beast, or was drowned !—but heaven's will be done ! When I lost my child, I lost all ; the spring faded in my sight ; books and conversation lost all their charms, and I retired here in order to qualify myself, by prayer and repentance, to be united with



my dear wife and child in the realms of bliss." A tear stole down the old man's cheek as he pronounced these words.

*Jack.* My good father, I feel for your misfortunes, but your last expression is truly consolatory; a few years will re-unite you to all again. You have acted a wise part in withdrawing yourself from the world, in which there is scarce a drop of joy to every cup of misery. I know not what wealth is, I never tasted it; but I know those that roll in it, and yet they appear to me to be the most unhappy people on earth." (*Here Jack, at the request of the Old Man, related his own story.*)

*Old Man.* My son, you are now in the flower of youth, and retirement like mine would but ill suit the activity of your mind. There is not one belonging to me that knows, I am persuaded, the place of my retirement. I came from a certain place, (which he described;) I had only one brother, he is yet alive; he is rich, for he now enjoys my estate in addition to his own; he is a humane man, and when he hears your artless relation, I am persuaded he will provide for you; but take care of my name and retreat; a single word of all that has passed between us, must never pass your lips. Jack faithfully

promised to observe the injunction, and after staying a day or two with the old man, he left him, but his heart was so full that he could not say a word. Having taken the course which he was directed, he came, on the second day, within sight of an old castle. As he was attentively surveying some of the ruins, a gentleman came up to him, and asked him how he liked the castle. "I like it very well," answered Jack; "I dare say the hand that raised it has long since mouldered into dust. Pray, Sir, does any one live in it at present?" "None;" answered the gentleman; "it is haunted." "Perhaps it is only in imagination," said Jack, "for I never heard of an old castle that was not haunted, and I do not wonder at it, for they are well suited for ghosts and goblins; and if there be any such airy beings, I should like to hear a little of their conversation.

*Gentleman.* This castle was built by one of my ancestors, and my brother, my dear brother, was the last that resided in it. He was a good man, and very justly called the father of the poor; he was legs to the lame, and eyes to the blind. He had an only daughter, as fair as newborn light, the heiress of all his pro-

perity; but, alas! she went out to walk one evening on the sea-shore, when the tide, very probably swept my dear niece away. My dear brother lost all when he lost her, and, as we never could hear of him since, grief, undoubtedly, broke his heart.

*Jack.* Sir, you have one consolation; you are an affectionate brother, and the tender manner in which you speak of your niece is a proof of the goodness of your heart.

*Gentleman.* I have often wept for the loss of both, but, as the old building seems to have raised your curiosity, come along with me, and I will show you the inside.

Jack bowed, and went with the gentleman, who showed him many of the apartments, and brought him at last to an old tower, covered with ivy. "Here," said the gentleman, "my dear brother used to pass some of the dearest moments of his life, in reading and contemplation; you see it commands an extensive prospect, beautifully hung with ivy; a favourite nightingale used to sing on that tree." Jack was highly pleased, and said, he should like to pass a night in the turret. "Why," said the gentlemen, "I told you before, that the castle is haunted,



and if you venture to sleep a night in it you shall be well rewarded." Jack in an instant consented. The gentleman took him home to his house, gave him plenty to eat and drink, and ordered a fire to be lighted in one of the best rooms in the castle, with some books to amuse him. As soon as night came, he went to his apartments. He was determined if any one paid him a visit, that they should come through the key-hole, for he locked the door, snuffed his candle, and began to read. When he found himself sleepy, he said his prayers and went to bed; but just as he was sinking into rest, he was alarmed with a dreadful noise, he thought he heard all the doors in the castle fly open at once; the sound of a foot was heard on the stairs, every step heavier than the last. Hearing the noise of chains, Jack's heart began to fail him, and he thought the candle burned blue. "What," said he, "should I be afraid of? where am I? I am in the presence of God! I am under his protection, why then should I be afraid?" The noise began to die away; Jack fell into a deep sleep, for he was tired, and did not awake till the sun began to play in the room. The first thing he did was to return thanks to heaven, and

as soon as he dressed himself he walked down stairs, and was met at the door by the gentleman and many of the neighbours, who could scarce believe their eyes when they saw him alive; they were very glad of it, however, and quite impatient to hear how he passed the night. Jack related all that happened in a very modest manner; the gentleman was so highly pleased with his conduct, that he presented him with a purse, brought him into his wardrobe, and dressed him out in a suit of very fine clothes, in which he appeared to great advantage, for nature had given him a fine person and a genteel winning air. As his curiosity was raised he wished to gratify it, and at the same time he thought it would be pleasing to the gentleman, who had behaved to him in so generous a manner. As soon as the night approached, he took up his lodgings in the same room. Having secured the door, trimmed his candle, and fanned the fire, he began to read. About midnight, he felt his mind awfully impressed with a dead silence, which was soon followed by a confused murmur, intermixed with sounds that seemed to die away in sobs and sighs; his heart began to fail, but he soon plucked up his courage,

lighted a second candle, resolved to wait the event, for the thoughts of his father, mother, and brothers, had banished sleep from his eyes. In a few minutes he heard the heavy tread and the clank of chains approaching the chamber-door; Jack cried aloud, "Enter, if you dare; you will find me here under the protection of the living God;" on which he heard the sound of a foot descending to the great hall, but so heavy, that he thought the stairs sunk at every step; but this was not all, for he now heard the most dismal groans, such as he conceived could only come from some person in the agonies of death. "Perhaps," said he, "those groans call on me for assistance; perhaps some murderer has just planted his dagger in the breast of innocence and beauty; yesterday I was applauded for my courage, let me now give a proof of it; on which he snatched up a dagger in one hand, and took a candle in the other; he followed the groans through several rooms till he saw a man in a corner with a lantern in his hand: he ran up to him immediately, clapped the dagger to his breast, and declared, in a firm tone of voice, that he would plant it in it that moment, if he did not tell him

what brought him there. The man was so much dismayed that he begged his life, and promised to tell him every thing.

“The gentleman,” said he, “to whom this castle of right belonged, had an only daughter, the fairest creature in the word, she was the heiress of his estates and wealth; her uncle, that offered you so much for sleeping here, saw, that if she was out of the way, he would have all. Accordingly he gave as great a ruffian as myself a large sum of money to dispatch her; we watched a proper opportunity for that purpose, and one evening, as she was walking on the sea-shore, without her maid, we seized her, carried her into a wood, and were just about to plunge a knife into her breast, when she assured us, if we would spare her life, she would tell us where there was a great treasure hid in one of the old towers of the castle; her tears, her youth, and the hopes of the treasure, softened our hardened hearts, and we spared her life, on condition that she would tell us where the treasure laid. We then brought her to a passage under ground which we knew, and which leads to a cell in this castle. The treasure, as she said, was buried very deep; how to get at it was the

question. Her father, as soon as he lost his child, went away, and has not been heard of since. My comrade and I thought that a good opportunity, and in order to keep any one from living in the castle, we spread a report that it was haunted. The uncle's guilty conscience made him believe it; we used to come at night, and drag plough-chains through it." "But what have you done with the lady?" said Jack, impatiently, "is she yet alive?" "Yes, she is alive," said the wretch. "Where?" "In the cell."—"Lead me to it this minute!" said Jack. "I will," replied the villain, which he did. But, heaven, how many different feelings were raised in Jack's breast at once, when he beheld one of the fairest faces bedewed with tears. She held her neck forward, for she thought that he was going to murder her; but when she saw Jack's countenance filled with tenderness and his eyes with tears, her spirits began to rise, and she had just strength enough to ask him, "If he was an inhabitant of this world." Jack gently raised her up, and softly whispered, that he came to snatch her from her cold cell, which was damp with her sighs. Jack instantly took her by the hand, led her forth, and shut



the villain up in her place. When he brought her into his room, he pressed her to take a small glass of wine, telling her not to be alarmed, for that heaven had ordained that he should be her deliverer.—

“I read it,” answered she, in your eyes;

“I hear it in your voice, and experience it in your kind conduct.” “There is no

time to be lost; if we stay a moment,”

said Jack, “we are both undone! your uncle, to hide his villainy, will take both our lives.” Jack put a flask of wine in

his pocket, and they fled under the darkness of the night. The young lady leaned

on his arm, and, just as the dawn began to appear, they made towards a wood,

and concealed themselves in a thicket;

the young lady was so fatigued, that she soon fell asleep on Jack’s breast, and

never was there so fair a flow’ret on any bosom. Jack would not venture to sleep,

but watched over her slumbers, lest any thing should happen to her. But his heart

bled to see her tender breast and arms torn with thorns and briars.

Fatigue and the murmuring of a stream invited Jack to sleep; but his anxiety for

Mary, which was the name of the young lady, caused him to shake off the slum-

bers that were softly alighting on his eye-

lids ; nay, his fears on her account were such, that he trembled at every breeze that rustled through the leaves, and thought in imagination that he heard people talking. The sun soon arose, and perhaps, in his golden race, he never shone on so innocent a pair, since the days of our first parents. Mary now awoke, and seemed for some time lost in surprise. "How beautiful," said she, "is that sun, how sweet the breath of morning, how tender and melting the note of that linnet ! thanks be to the Author of all that I see and hear—that sent you to deliver me from the horrid gloom of a prison !" addressing herself to Jack. Jack pressed her hand with a tenderness which words could but ill express. Having allayed their thirst, with some fruit that hung on a tree just over their heads, they began to think of what was best to be done, and, after some consultation with each other, it was agreed that they should stay where they were until the approach of night. Mary wept as often as she mentioned her dear father's name, but Jack cheered her with soothing words : towards the evening, Jack crept through the bushes to a little height, in order to take a view of the country, to enable them to shape

their course, and having satisfied his mind in this respect, he missed his way on his return; he paused, endeavoured to recollect, but his heart was frozen to ice with fear; he dared not call, lest his voice should be heard by his pursuers; he was scarcely able to move, and a thousand ideas rushed into his mind at once, and every one more alarming than the other. At length, he thought he saw a stripe of Mary's coat on a bush; his hopes began to revive, he went up to it, kissed it, and pardoned the thorny bush that tore it. He saw another stripe at a little distance, till at length he came in view of the spot where he had left Mary; but heavens, what was his surprise, when he found that Mary was not there. "They have found her!" said he in an agony of despair; but Mary was at a little distance, and, as soon as she heard his voice, she made to it. Jack clasped her in his arms, as a mariner would clasp a faithful plank in a shipwreck, and wept over her with a tenderness not to be expressed. The sun had now ran his course, and though the moon did not shine, yet the sky was hung with such airy clouds, that it afforded light sufficient to guide their steps through the wood. All was silent except the nightingale, which



now and then poured a tender note. When they had got out of the wood they came to the side of a river; they walked some time on the margin of it, till Jack thought he saw a boat. Jack approached it with trembling, and finding there was no person in it, he and Mary stepped in, having left some money first on the banks of the river for the owner of it. The waves were gentle, and they sailed down them till the dawn began to appear, Jack conducted the boat into a shady corner, where they landed; drew up the boat under the covert of trees, walked till they came to a wood, where they concealed themselves in a little leaf-wrought grotto, which the hand of nature seemed to have prepared for their reception. As soon as the sun smiled on them once more, Jack thought he discovered a hamlet at a distance; his fears began to subside, as he thought they were now out of all danger. Jack proposed to visit the village. "I am sure," said he, "we shall find some good people, and I shall leave you here until I return, which, you may depend on it, will be a very short time." Mary started at this proposition; but after some conversation she agreed to it, but begged that he would not stay; Jack

assured her that he would not, and on this condition he set out for the village. On his approach to it, he met a simple looking peasant, that invited him to come to his cot, and to partake of whatever it could afford. He accepted the kind invitation, and was charmed with the simplicity of the wife and children, which reminded him of his own family, and drew tears in his eyes; but his heart whispered to him, "Why should your tears flow? think of the dangers you have escaped; heaven has been so pleased with your conduct, as to appoint you the guide, the support, and the guardian of beauty, innocence, and youth; be grateful and rejoice." These thoughts flew across his mind in an instant, and cheered his drooping spirits. Jack soon observed that the cottager and his wife interested themselves in his heavy look, and the children gathered round him, played with his buttons, and climbed up his knees. Jack was so much affected with the simplicity and kindness of the good pair, that he told them his whole story, which drew many a tear down their cheeks. A little council was then called to know what was best to be done. The peasant spoke first:—"Our village, it is true, is small; the in-

habitants know little more than myself. I do not believe that one of them ever travelled out of the parish, but if a stranger should happen to arrive, they are very inquisitive. The 'Squire is a very good man; he chided his son for calling the old grey-headed gardener a rascal; when my little Sally was sick of a fever, he used to come every day, and bring medicines with him; and when she recovered, he was as glad of it as if she was his own child; now my advice is, that you do bring the young lady here to-night, and stay with us as long as you please. While I have a morsel of meat you shall both be welcome. I have a garden, I have enough." Jack took him by the hand, and thanked him with a look that spoke more than words could express, and promised to follow his advice. Jack was now impatient to return to Mary, and the peasant accompanied him to within a few paces of the grotto where he had left her.—Mary had like to faint at the sight of Jack, for she thought she should never see him again; as soon as her spirits were a little composed, the following conversation took place.

*Mary.* O dear! I thought I should

never see you again; why did you stay so long?

*Jack.* Do not blame me, I returned as soon as I could.

*Mary.* Why, did any thing happen?

*Jack.* Yes, I have very good news to tell you. As I was going towards the village, I met an honest peasant; he brought me to his cottage, where his affectionate wife entertained me with the best it could afford; in short, I found them so kind, so good, and so simple, that I concealed nothing from them: I told them all.

*Mary.* Told them all! we are undone—they will betray us—why should we not rather trust to the woods and the wilds than to the human race! the woods and the wilds have sheltered us, they have not betrayed us—Oh Jack!

*Jack.* Do not be alarmed; I wish you could see the peasant and his wife, and their lovely children; we will remain here until night, and then we will go to the peasant. These words soothed Mary; Jack invented a thousand little stories to amuse her; sometimes they dwelt on the music of the little warblers that hopped from spray to spray; the variety of their plumage; their loves, and the cruelty of

the schoolboys, that to the tender mother of her young; then the texture of the snowy lily, and the fidelity of the pointed thorn, that guarded the wild rose from the rude hand of him that would snatch it from its parent stem. In this pleasing converse did they pass the day, until the sun took his farewell in the west. Having set out for the peasant's, they walked very slow, as Mary's shoes were torn to pieces, and her feet pierced with ruthless thorns; at length they reached the little cottage, the calm abode of innocence and peace. The children had sunk into rest. The good peasant and his wife had trimmed their fire, arranged the little furniture, and spread the frugal board with vegetables, cheese, fruit, and a can of home-brewed ale. The moment Mary entered, all her fears vanished: after supper, the good woman brought her into a little room, and bathed her feet with warm water; showed her to bed, where she slept soundly till the sun shone the next morning through her latticed casement, hung with ivy. Jack was heartily rejoiced to find that Mary was quite refreshed, and proposed a walk in the garden: Jack addressed Mary thus: "Now, you see that heaven has thus far protected



us, and there is no doubt that he will protect us in future, as our trust is in him. We cannot think of being a burthen to this good pair; if you trust to me, I will conduct you to a place where we may pass the rest of our days in peace and safety, and not at a very great distance." Mary answered, "I will follow your advice; I have lost my dear mother, I have lost my dear father, I have none on earth but you." Jack pressed her hand, and after they had communicated their intentions to the peasant and his wife, it was agreed, for their greater safety, that Mary should lay aside her female dress, and assume that of a young man, which the peasant soon provided; it was simple and flowing. It is scarce possible to describe the parting scene.—The peasant and his wife were so affected, that they insisted on accompanying them, which they did a considerable distance, and would accept of nothing but a lock of their hair as a keep-sake.

Jack and Mary walked in silence for some time; at length they entered into the following conversation:

*Jack.* What affects you?

*Mary.* I have been thinking of the good couple we have parted with: what a



loving pair ! What a happy father and mother ! Oh, that it had pleased Providence that I had been born a peasant's daughter ; then I should have an uncle perhaps that would take me to his arms, that would look over my tender years, and instead of seeking my life would shed tears if any trifling misfortune should befall me ; and yet my uncle had sufficient wealth, extensive estates highly cultivated ; a stately mansion, woods, and waterfalls ; but, as soon as ambition got possession of his breast, it could not be soothed to rest either by the singing of birds, the melody of waterfalls, or the enchanting walks in his garden.

*Jack.* True ! Strangers ; we are all in pursuit of content, and some are so foolish as to think that it can be only purchased with gold. Oh ! vain man, that cannot be made wise from the examples of millions even in his own day ! Come, let us leave such wretches to their own thoughts, if they dare to think ; no, they dare not think ; they fly from themselves. Let us enjoy the breath of early morn ; see those clouds, how softly they sail along ; those verdant woods, how grateful to the eye. If you are happy, my dear Mary, I am happy ; you shall be the daughter of a

peasant; my father and mother will adopt you, they will love you as their own child. I have a little sister, she is yours also.

*Mary.* Dear Jack, I am happy; I long to see your father and mother, I long to embrace their knees, and call them mine as well as yours. Are you sure that you know the way?

*Jack.* Make yourself easy, we shall soon arrive at our journey's end; lean on my arm.

About twelve o'clock they sat down on the banks of a silver spring, beneath the shade of a venerable oak, and took a slight repast. They saw houses sprinkled on the sides of the hills as they passed along, but met with no one till the evening, when they were overtaken by a shepherd, and as he saw that Mary was quite fatigued, he invited them to pass that night in his little straw-built shed, which was just at hand. As they approached, the children came out to meet them.—The good woman of the house received them with a hearty welcome, which was visibly written on her countenance and in her manners, which were rustic it is true, but full of good-nature and simplicity. The shepherd entertained his

guests with a few stories, and that variety might not be wanting, the frugal supper was crowned with a song, which the shepherd's wife sung in her best style, which the husband accompanied on his oaten reed. The next morning Mary still found herself tired, but her anxiety to reach the end of her journey, induced her to press Jack to forego the shepherd's kind invitation, to remain a day or two under his peaceful roof. The shepherd and his wife could scarce be prevailed on to accept a trifling present. About three o'clock in the afternoon, they came within view of a wood, which they gazed on with rapture.—“Now,” said Jack to Mary, “you must prepare yourself for a trial.” Mary started, and the roses fled from her cheek. “Do not be alarmed,” said he, “would you not be glad to see your father?” “Oh, that blessing is not reserved for me in this world; but I trust I shall see him in the next.” “I hope that blessing is reserved for you, Mary. Your father lives in the bosom of that wood; chance led me to his cell. When he thought that he lost you, he sought for some abode in the bosom of solitude, where he might pass the remainder of his days in contempla-

tion and prayer : how his heart will be charmed, when I restore you to his arms!" Mary stood like a statue, with her eyes fixed on Jack; a flood of tears at length relieved her swollen heart. She promised to follow Jack's advice in every thing, and though she was so much fatigued, that a few moments before she could scarce advance a few paces, yet the unexpected pleasure of seeing her father once more, had such an effect upon her tender frame, that she seemed to tread on air. When they approached the hermit's cell, Jack stood with a trembling heart and open ear, to drink in every sound. He then advanced a little nearer with caution, when, to his inexpressible joy, he saw the venerable old man returning from the well with an earthen pitcher of water. The good old man startled at the sight of two persons, but he soon recollected Jack's voice and features, conducted him and Mary to his cell, and having seated them on a sofa of green turf, he spread his homely board with some bread and fruit, and presented them with a cup of pure spring water.—Notwithstanding Mary's promise to Jack, scarce could she refrain from throwing herself into the arms of her dear father.

Her colour came and went, the tear insensibly stole down her cheek. The agitation of her mind did not escape the good old man, and in order to compose her spirits, he took down his flute, and began to play upon it. It was a favourite tune, which Mary had often heard him play before. Mary struggled with her feelings for some time, but when she came to one note, she was obliged to yield.—The good old man caught her in his arms, just as she was falling into a swoon. At length the roses began to expand by degrees on her cheek, and her pulse began to beat. Jack and the old man had lost the power of utterance during this affecting scene. The first words that Mary spoke when she came to herself, were, “Oh, my dearest father!” These words had such an effect upon the old man, that he looked for some time alternately on Jack and Mary, but could not speak. “Yes,” said he at last, bursting the bands of silence “thy voice is the voice of my child, and thy features are the features of my child; has heaven, in pity to my old age, permitted thee to descend on earth to visit thy father!” On which he folded her in his arms, and wept over her. Jack now related all that



happened from the first day he saw him to the moment he was then speaking.—The old man could only thank Jack with his tears; but it is impossible to describe his feelings, when he heard of the villany of his brother, and his only brother too. “But he shall be disappointed now that my child is restored to my arms; it is my duty, as a father, to put her in possession of her estates; for this purpose it is my intention to quit this cell, and return with you both, (addressing himself to Jack and Mary,) to the house of a tried friend, near to my inhuman brother’s; and before we set out, I shall digest a little plan which I shall communicate to you on the way. In the mean time let us walk to my little chapel; it is a short distance, and offer up our thanks to God. The chapel was built of turf, canopied all over with honey-suckle and sweet briar; the altar was hung with ivy. After prayers they returned, and spent the evening in conversation. On the fifth day, the old man and his daughter entered into the following discourse—

*Father.* My dear child, as you seem to be quite recovered from the fatigues of your journey, we had better think of returning.



*Daughter.* Oh, father ! sure you would not think of returning ; you know what snares my uncle will lay to get us into his power.

*Father.* Do not be alarmed, my dear ; there is no danger ; I have more friends in that quarter than he imagines ; though my arm is weak, I can call in the arm of the law ; besides, it would be something like a distrust in the justice of heaven, to entertain the least fear of any thing that he can do. A monster, that shut his ears to the cries of his own flesh and blood, and hardened his heart to the feelings of humanity ! What, to be afraid of any thing he can do ! No, my dear child, when his crimes are exposed, bad as society is, he will be hunted out of it.

*Daughter.* But, my dear father, we are very happy as we are. Can any thing be more pleasing than to pass our time as we do. What can be more soft and enchanting than the notes of the nightingale, that sings every night on the branch that hangs over my window ! What can be more delicious than our strawberries !— Besides, Jack will never leave us ; for what is wealth ? You see it could not make my uncle happy.

*Father.* You are right, my dear ; it is

virtue only that can make us happy on this side the grave. But I am old, and the date of every mortal is but short.—What would become of you then? You are too young to be in love with solitude; and after my death, if any thing should happen to Jack, what would become of you? No, we must think of returning; it is true, nothing but my love for my child, should be able to tear me from my retirement.

Jack by this time returned with some moss and sweet-smelling leaves, which he strewed on the seats in the grotto. The old man related to him the conversation which they had held in his absence. Jack agreed it was best to return; wealth, he said, undoubtedly contributed very little to happiness, but it still furnished a benevolent mind with many opportunities of doing good. In a few days afterwards they set out on their return; the old man told them several stories on the way, which beguiled the length of it, so that in a few days they found themselves within three or four miles of the family seat. “Now,” said the old man, “let us pause: one of my faithful tenants lived in that valley, I hope he is still alive. Jack, do you go for him, tell him an old friend

wants to see him in yonder hazel copse, where we will wait till your return." The tenant, at first sight, gazed on his old master for some time, and then threw his arms about his neck, and wept aloud: "O my master, my long-lost master!" He then introduced his daughter and Jack to him: the honest farmer was so overcome with joy, that he could not refrain from tears. As soon as it was night he conducted them to his house; his wife was so rejoiced to see them, that she could scarce recollect what she was doing. The next day the old gentleman said to the farmer, "Andrew, you must follow my advice. You must endeavour to get it conveyed to my brother's ears, that there is a person in your house that can interpret dreams and tell fortunes; my dress, and the length of my beard, will favour the harmless deceit." Andrew succeeded so far, that on the evening of the next day he came, and wished to see the fortune-teller, as he called him. The old man desired him to be shewn into a room which was just light enough to discover his beard and his dress.

Old Man. I understand, Sir, that you wish to consult me.

The Brother. Yes, Sir, very much.

Old Man. You do not sleep easy?

The Brother. I dare not venture to sleep.

Old Man. You are troubled with horrid dreams.

The Brother. Horrid beyond expression.

Old Man. No wonder;—you had a brother?

The Brother. Yes, and the best of brothers.

Old Man. You had a niece.

The Brother. Yes, the most innocent and affectionate niece that ever existed.

Old Man. Need I tell you how you behaved to her.

The Brother. (*Almost speechless.*) No, no. I am the vilest wretch that ever existed. Know that I am a murderer—that I have dipped my hands in innocent blood; in the blood of my own niece, in the blood of my brother's daughter.—Oh! tell me, if there is any hope for repentance.

Old Man. Can you repent?

The Brother. Yes; but I cannot call on the name of heaven. My lips would profane that sacred name. Tell me, Sir, I say, is there any hope for repentance?

Old Man. Do you know whether your brother is alive?

The brother. I fear not; I broke his heart. If he were alive, if I could find him out, I would fly to him; I would implore his forgiveness; I would entreat him to pray to heaven for me: such an advocate would be heard in favour of such a wretch as I. The old man at those words drew a curtain, and let in the light. As soon as his brother saw his face, he fainted, and it was some time before he recovered. Surprise and astonishment having had such an effect upon him, that he fell into a fit of sickness, of which he died in a few days; but not until he was forgiven by Mary and her father.

The old man immediately resumed the possession of his castle and estates. Jack led him to the cell, in which the ruffian confined Mary, where they found the dead body of the one that Jack had enclosed; and, on enquiry, it was found that the other had been executed for setting fire to a house.

The joyful tidings of the return of Mr. Smith and his beautiful daughter, was spread in an instant through the country; every one rejoiced at it, because they thought they were both dead. Thomas



Williams, the blind poet, wrote some verses on the occasion, which the little boys and girls got by heart; nay, the old people strove to remember some of them; the peasants put on their best holiday clothes, and repaired in crowds, to congratulate their good old master, under whom they had seen so many happy days. The good old man shook them by the hand, called them his children, and they called him their father; but when Mary appeared, they could not refrain from tears; they wept, and they wept aloud too; and as she walked along they scattered flowers in her way. Mr. Smith caused a large quantity of wheat to be distributed among the poor of the neighbourhood, and ordered every cottage to be repaired at his own expense. One day he gave a feast in his park, and every one was welcome that came. When the company began to be merry, he arose and a dead silence immediately followed. "My good and faithful friends," said he, "I have a question to propose. A rich man once had a favourite lamb which he prized beyond gold; a wily wolf watched an opportunity to seize upon this lamb, and would have actually devoured it one day, if a young man had not snatched it



from him, and restored it to the owner. Now what reward should the rich man give this young man?" One man said, he should give him a piece of gold. "No," said an old man, "you hear that the rich man prized the lamb above gold, he should therefore give him the lamb, and gold in the bargain." "Thou hast said right," quoth Mr. Smith: "I am the rich man, my daughter is the lamb, and this is the young man (pointing to Jack) that snatched her from the jaws of death, and restored her to my arms; he is entitled to her, and he shall have her: that is, he has my hearty consent." The company applauded the generosity of the old man, and, in the course of a few days, the youthful pair were married. Jack's mind was not in the least lifted up with any pride on this sudden change of fortune. His affability, condescension, and goodness, won him the esteem of rich and poor. He employed his leisure hours in reading the best books, and visiting the sick, in which he was always accompanied by Mary. They were known throughout all the neighbourhood by the name of the happy couple. Jack longed to see his father, mother, and little sister; he dreamt of them every night.—

One day, as he was walking at a little distance from the castle, he met an old man weighed down with age and fatigue, with whom he entered into the following conversation.

*Jack.* Father, you seem to be quite fatigued, lean on my arm.

*Old Man.* Thank you, my son; I have travelled far, and you see by these scanty white hairs, that the days of my pilgrimage have been many. I had a son like you, and very like you in youth and figure; he was the prop of my old age, and the light of my eyes; but it pleased heaven to take him out of a troublesome world, before he was tainted with its vice.

*Jack.* Heaven knows best how to dispose of us.

*Old Man.* I bow with resignation to the decree of heaven. I shall soon follow; I am near my journey's end, and I expect to return to my native place in a few days.

*Jack.* Well, I hope you have left all your fellow villagers happy?

*Old Man.* I left them all in grief.

*Jack.* I am sorry for it; pray, what is the cause?

*Old Man.* About two months ago, as I was walking through one of my fields,

I found a little boy stretched under a tree, with his head lying on his hand.

*Jack.* Asleep.

*Old Man.* Yes, but in the cold sleep of death, and yet he was so beautiful in that sleep, that he might be compared to a new-mown lily.

*Jack.* Heavens, the blood freezes in my veins ! do you recollect his dress ?

*Old Man.* Scarcely, it was so torn with bushes and briars. I buried him with my own son ; they were fit companions to repose together, and all the village lament his fate. Why, young man, do your cheeks fly their colour ? Instead of supporting me, let me now support you ; let us sit on this bank.

Jack sunk down on the bank, seized the old man's hand, pressed it, and strove to convey it to his lips ; it was some time before he could speak : " Oh, venerable father," said he, " assist me on this trying occasion ; that young boy was my brother. Oh, that I had left him at home with my aged parents ! Oh, Tom was right ; Willy was too young to be left alone. What will my father say ? What will my mother say ? I am the cause of all. My brother, my youngest brother, died for want ; but it is one consolation

that he sleeps with your son. Yes, his clothes were torn, and his legs and arms were cut with bushes and briars. I see the blood streaming; he called, and I could not hear; but heaven heard his cries, and called him to himself." The old man comforted Jack, and told him that he might be mistaken; that young boys resembled each other; but whether he was or was not his brother, his untimely fate demanded the sympathetic tear.

The old man continued to pour the balm of consolation from his lips, so that Jack's wounded mind at length began to feel the soothing effect of it. As they walked on slowly, the conversation was renewed.

*Traveller.* Perhaps you may be desirous to know something of me. I was born to a little estate on the banks of a winding river. As I was fond of agriculture, I guided my plough with my own hands; encircled my farm with a hedge of white thorn and lofty pine, and laid out a garden in a little spot which nature pointed out as fittest for it. I planted only such fruits and flowers as grew wild in the woods and vallies. My table was covered with plenty of wholesome food, and I envied not the man, whose polished





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board reflected a host of glasses and decanters, filled with the juice of the grape. Pride and ambition never called at my door, yet I was not without my sorrows. I married when I was young; my wife was lovely in my eyes, and that was sufficient. She was too good for me; for heaven claimed her a few years after we had exchanged the nuptial vow. I had an only son; I have only one comfort remaining, my niece, my brother's daughter, an orphan; she has none but me to watch over her tender years. I hope that heaven has left her to close my eyes in death, and to follow my remains to the grave. On looking over my accounts a few days ago, I found that I owe a poor man in this neighbourhood a small sum of money; he earned it with the sweat of his brow, but it escaped my memory. I am now on my way to pay him, and when I have done that, I shall return to my little home, ready to pay the last debt when called on. Jack was highly pleased with the little history of the old man, and still more with the simple and unaffected tone of voice in which he delivered it. He brought him to the castle, washed his feet, and placed bread before him.— Mary perceived a cloud on Jack's coun-

tenance, which he attributed to the change of the weather, as he did not wish to let her know the sorrowful news he had just heard. Jack now looked forward with impatience to the day that he appointed to meet his brothers. Within a few days of the time, he set out with a servant; Mary wanted to accompany him, but the weather was so bad, that he prevailed on her to stay at home, as he assured her that he would not be long absent. Jack was very richly drest, and rode a fine horse, with silver trappings. When he came near the meeting of the twelve roads, his heart began to beat betwixt hopes and fears. He saw some persons there, he strove to count them, but the tears flowed so quick into his eyes that he could not. It was a very rainy day, and as he came almost up to them, he rode under a tree, and counted ten; "Ah!" said he, "but Willy is not there; it is true enough what the old man told me. Ah! miserable man that I am! what will my father and mother say to me? Having attempted, but in vain, to dry up his tears, he rode up to them, cast his eye over them, but what was his joy to behold Willy, for they had placed him in the middle, to shelter him from the rain and the cold of the day. It

was easy to see by their clothing that fortune had not smiled on them; nay some of them were bare-footed, and so thinly clad, that the wind out of pity seemed to pass by them in silence. Jack spoke to them in a surly tone: "What brought you here," said he, "I am persuaded you are on no good design; what idle looking fellows! Are you going to murder that little white-headed boy in the midst of you? I am a justice of peace, and if you do not give a proper account of yourselves, I will send you all to jail this minute." Thomas then stepped forth out of the circle, with his hat in his hand, and spoke as follows: "Sir, if you will have the goodness to listen to us, we can give a very good account of ourselves. We are the sons of one father and mother; our parents were poor and aged. Our eldest brother, to whose advice we always listened, proposed that we should seek our fortunes, and we agreed to it. On this very day twelve months we parted on this very spot. You see, Sir, there are twelve roads, and each took one, our eldest brother took that, (pointing to it,) with a sacred promise, if living, to meet us here this day; there are eleven of us now you see, but the twelfth is wanting; our eldest

brother is not yet arrived, and you may read our anxiety in our faces. As to the little boy he is our youngest brother; look at his features, and they will tell you that he is our brother, and all that I have told you is truth." "Well, well," said Jack, softening his voice a little, "perhaps you have told me truth, and as the day is cold and rainy, and your clothing thin, you must all come with me to an inn at a little distance, and my servant shall remain and watch for the return of your brother; if he should come as you say, then I will believe you and befriend you; but if he should not, then I will send you all to prison." Tom then spoke again: "Sir, it is easy to see that you are a great man, and the laws of the land are in your hand; but we trust that the divine law of humanity is also in your heart.—Now, if it should happen that our brother should arrive in our absence, we know not what might be the consequence, for his heart is tender. It is true the day is rainy, but we do not feel it. Then let your goodness permit us to remain where we are." "I hope," replied Jack, "that I can feel for the sorrows of the distressed as much as any man. One of you may remain, and I myself will stay with him; my servant



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shall conduct you to the inn, and order a dinner;" after much persuasion, they agreed to this, and it was settled that Tom should stay. After a little conversation with Tom, Jack pulled off his cloke, and covered him with it; and, by the advice of Tom, rode after his brothers. When he came to the inn, he met them all in the yard; for the inn-keeper said he would not admit such shabby fellows. Jack then led them to another inn over the way, where they were received with compassion and courtesy; he ordered a sumptuous dinner, and pressed his brothers to eat, but they could not. It was with much pressing that he could get them to drink a glass of wine, which they mingled with their tears. Jack slipped out of the room, and returned in a few minutes, in the very dress he wore the day he parted. They all knew him the moment he entered, and wept over him as if he had been a breathless corpse. The servant was sent with the joyful news to Tom, who entered the room almost breathless. He fell upon Jack's neck, and in sighs and broken accents told him the severity with which they had just been treated by the justice, who spoke to them in a morose tone, and threatened to send

them to jail. Jack told them the whole. They now dined heartily together. Jack ordered his portmanteau to be brought, and presented each of them a new suit of clothes; but Willy's was the finest. The next day they set out for home, and were so happy as to find their father, mother, and little sister alive. Jack never knew such a joyful meeting on earth; he invited the curate and his family to dinner; to whom he related all that had happened to him in the course of the year, and each in his turn, followed the example of their eldest brother.

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
TOM.

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On the day that I parted with my dear brothers, at the meeting of twelve roads, my heart was so heavy that I scarcely recollect any thing that happened to me until the evening. I was at last roused by

the report of a gun in a neighbouring wood. I ascended a little hill, but could see no one; I observed some houses at a distance, and resolved to make the best of my way for them. As I was passing through the skirt of the wood just mentioned, I saw a blackbird endeavouring to hop out of my way. I followed it a few paces, and took it up half breathless; it was just wounded, I put it in my bosom, and began to reflect on the wanton cruelty of man—man, that proudly calls himself the lord of the creation, when, in fact, if we were to judge of him by his actions, he is the very tyrant of the creation.—“Who knows,” said I, “but that this poor bird, which is now dying on my breast, was pouring forth its evening song, when its liquid notes were arrested by the contents of the fatal tube! perhaps too, the trigger was drawn by the feeble finger of a school-boy, the pride of his father and mother; and yet, who knows but this poor bird has left a little family behind, as dear to it as that school-boy is to his parents; would I could find out their downy abode, I would endeavour to rear them. I would endeavour to supply the place of an affectionate mother.” As I said these words, the bird expired. A pleasing kind of

pensive melancholy now pervaded my mind. "I am quite a stranger in this country," said I to myself; "I have provisions enough in my little scrip, I think I had better pass the night in this wood, under the shade of some friendly tree.— Having thus resolved, I ascended a hill, crowned with a few spreading trees, and enjoyed the pleasure of the setting sun, that sung in silence as it sailed along the western slope of heaven, "The hand that made me is divine." The dew of sleep at length fell on my eye-lids, and, as I predicted, I passed the night in a dream, with my father, mother, brothers, and sister, in our own dear cottage. The next morning I was lost in wonder, love, and praise, at the rising of the sun. Having breakfasted on a crust of bread and a few water-cresses, I set on my devious journey. I had not travelled far, when a shower of rain compelled me to take shelter under a tree. I was not long in this situation, before a young man came up to me, and begged to stand by my side; a few moments after we entered into the following conversation :

*Tom.* This was a fine morning; I did not expect it would rain.

*Stranger.* A true emblem of human



life; nothing but uncertainty; we are born, perhaps, to fine prospects; but when we advance a little in life, those prospects are clouded.

*Tom.* True, Sir, your remarks are very just; but we should reflect, that man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.

*Stranger.* True. You are not a native of this part of the country, I suppose?

*Tom.* No, Sir, I am not.

*Stranger.* Were you bred to any line of business.

*Tom.* I was brought up to industry from my earliest youth; I can hold the plough, sow, reap, and thresh.

*Stranger.* Would I had been brought up in the same manner, but my father and mother were resolved to make what they called a gentleman of me; they spared no expense on my education; but the sudden death of my father put an end to all these flattering expectations; to work I knew not how, and to beg I was ashamed—those that courted my conversation, in the days of my prosperity, now turn aside with a malicious sneer; there are a few it is true, who are ready to give me what they term wholesome advice, but that is all.

*Tom.* Heaven! what a world we are

doomed to live! but cheer up; you are young; you are a scholar; perhaps you may one day reflect on those bitter moments with pleasure.

*Stranger.* True; it is the complaints of men that have made a Goddess of Fortune.

*Tom.* Perhaps you have not breakfasted, Sir; I have some provision in my scrip at your service.

*Stranger.* I thank you, I have; may your scrip be like the widow's cruse of oil in scripture. I suppose you would be glad of some employment?

*Tom.* Most undoubtedly; and would be glad to share my earnings with you.

*Stranger.* The people in this country are very jealous of strangers; besides, the wages of the day-labourer is small, scarce sufficient to procure a scanty subsistence. My heart bleeds for you: I wish I could assist you, but it is not in my power. The sun begins to shine once more; "may the sun of fortune shine on you! adieu.—The moment he said these words he sprang away, and was out of sight in an instant. I walked on slowly, and forgot my own sorrows in his. Having travelled about a mile, I thought I heard a noise behind me; I turned round, and was pleased to

see the young man, whose fate I was lamenting, in company with another, as it were in pursuit of me. I stopped: "this good creature," said I, "has not forgotten me; perhaps he is now flying on the wings of impatience to bring me back." but what was my surprise when they came up to me, almost breathless; they both seized me and threatened, with horrid imprecations, to kill me on the spot, if I offered to stir, or even open my lips. I saw it was in vain to resist; they tied my hands behind my back, and conducted me to a magistrate. Conscious that I had committed no crime, I called up all the resolution that innocence inspires; but my fortitude deserted me for a moment, when I heard the magistrate, in a surly tone of voice, cry out, "Bring in the highway-man." I was accordingly brought before his worship. The very sight of him made my knees smite each other, and a cold sweat bedewed my face; I knew the emotions of my mind were visible in my face, which the magistrate at once asserted to be a proof of my guilt. "You see," said he, "how the fellow stands self-condemned; see how pale he looks; see how he trembles; he has robbed this inoffensive well behaved man of three guineas; it was well

he did not murder him, for he presented a cocked pistol to his breast; he has not a word to say in his defence; let him be carried to prison, and loaded with irons; he is a robber and a murderer, I will engage, into the bargain. I summoned all my resolution, and attempted to speak, but in vain; I was hurried to prison; my only consolation was, that I saw by the countenance of some, that they pitied me: but such was the authority of the magistrate, that no one dared venture to speak; I was loaded with irons, and cast into a noisome cell. It is impossible to describe what I felt; I was so fatigued, however, that I fell asleep, and dreamed that I was at home with my father and mother; how dreadful was it to wake out of so pleasing a dream, and to find myself scarce able to move with heavy bolts. I prayed to heaven; I continued in this state for three days and nights, as I was told, for I could not distinguish night from day, such was the darkness of my prison-house: at the end of this time I heard the key turn, and I thought I saw a glimpse of light; my heart began to emerge, and a trembling ray of hope shone upon my soul. The jailer entered, and desired me to follow him; I told him I was unable to

walk with the weight of my fetters: he said he would help me. I strove to rise, and he assisted me; I leaned upon his shoulder, and entered a small room, where I found a venerable old man, with a few scattered hairs on his temples, as white as snow. He desired me to sit down on a chair, which he handed me. The jailer was then ordered to knock off my chains, and to withdraw. I was so weak that I believe I fainted. The venerable gentleman presented me with a glass of wine; and, when he saw that the blood began to revisit my cheeks, he addressed me in the following words, as nearly as I can recollect: "Young man, I cannot help telling you that I am interested in your case, but take care, let not this induce you to tell any thing but the truth: I am the friend of truth. I think the magistrate who committed you ought to have listened to what you had to say in your defence;—I think he was rather harsh; perhaps he acted from good intentions, but no man, however high in authority, ought to set himself above the law. Now tell all you know of this business, and depend upon it, that I will not divulge a single word that drops from your lips." As I perceived that he came with the best inten-



tions, and was disposed to listen to me, I told him who I was, whence I came, and almost every thing that happened to me from the moment that we parted until the time I was speaking. When I had done, he bade me be of good cheer, and that I should not want a friend in the hour of trial. He then called the turnkey, and desired him to make my situation as agreeable as possible, which he promised to do ; and in justice to him, I must say that he did, though I could easily discern from his conduct to the unhappy wretches committed to his charge, that his heart was as hard and as cold as the massy key that he carried in his hand. He brought me some good books, which I read, I hope, to some advantage.—The second day of the assizes I was put upon my trial; the sight of the court struck me at once with awe and reverence. When I was placed at the bar, I can scarce describe the rapid succession of my feelings: fear and hope alternately reigned in my heart. The prosecutor was called, and told his story, which the jury listened to with great attention; and it was amazing to think with what art he related it; once or twice, it is true, he faltered, and seemed at a loss. When

he was done, he was going to step down, but the judge desired him to remain, as he intended to ask him a few questions. The villain turned pale and trembled. The judge then proceeded to cross examine him in the following manner :—

*Judge.* Pray, Sir, in what part of the kingdom, did you pass the last twelve months ?

*Prosecutor.* In several parts, my Lord.

*Judge.* Name some one place.

*Prosecutor.* I cannot recollect any one place in particular.

*Judge.* Come, come;—you must not trifle on so serious and momentous an occasion. The life of a fellow-creature is at stake; you must give me a direct answer. I do not sit here to hold the scale of justice with a palsied hand, I intend to sift this matter to the very bottom; I must know who you are, whence you came, and your pursuits in life.

*Prosecutor.* I am a very poor honest man.

*Judge.* You may be very poor and honest, it is true, but I must be thoroughly convinced of it; your own testimony will not do; it must be corroborated by the testimony of others; by the testimony

of those that are known to the jury. If you are poor, how did you come by the three guineas stated in the indictment?

*Prosecutor.* I borrowed them from a friend.

*Judge.* Is that friend in court? You must produce him.

*Prosecutor.* My Lord, it would be adding to the black crime I have committed to consume the time of the court; I am the greatest villain in existence; I dare not look up to heaven for mercy; I chanced to see the innocent prisoner at the bar, one rainy morning under a tree; I took shelter under the same; I fell into conversation with him; I told him that I was an unfortunate young man; I saw the tear steal down his cheek; he offered to divide his scrip with me, for silver or gold he had none. I left him; I met a person, with whom I unhappily formed an acquaintance since I came into this part of the country. I told him that I had met with this young man; he paused, and said, "Why, life's a burthen to such a wretch, and it will render him a favour to rid him of the load; let us seize him, and swear that he has robbed you of some money, and we shall get forty pounds for convicting him." Unfortunately my evil genius

presided at that time, and I fell into the snare the villain laid for me; I strove to stifle the cries of my conscience, and to benumb my feelings, but in vain; your Lordship has awakened these feelings and the cries of my conscience ascend to heaven. Let me be dealt with as the law directs. I am now prepared to await my fate with resignation." The judge paused, and surveyed me for some minutes with a smile that I shall never forget, because there was something so heavily in it. Oh! what a benign, what a benevolent being is man, when he acts up to his duty. The jury looked on me with an eye of compassion, and a dead silence reigned upwards of two minutes. I looked round, and I saw that every countenance was interested in my feelings. The prosecutor prayed to be sent to prison, and the judge having first granted me a copy of my indictment, agreed, as he was apprehensive that the unhappy man would be torn to pieces by the populace. A collection to the amount of thirty pounds was made for me in court, and an honest farmer, who was present, brought me home to his house, and entrusted me with the care of his farm. I deposited the money that I received in his hands. I bought a new suit of clothes,

and discharged my duty faithfully to him, and promised to return to my service as soon as I fulfilled the promise I made of meeting you at the place appointed. I chose to meet you all there in my old garb. but here is the thirty pounds, which I tied up in the corner of my old coat, for the purpose of dividing amongst you.

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
SAMMY.

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AS soon as Tommy ended, Sammy begun. Soon after we had taken, (I had nearly said our last) adieu of each other, I walked on as far as the road led me, till at last I came to a little hamlet, on the side of a hill. A straw-built shed caught my attention, the door stood open, as if it



invited me to enter; accordingly I stepped in, and found a venerable old man and woman, seated by the side of each other, with a young woman spinning at a distaff, which she laid by, and without saying a single word, went to the cupboard, and laid some bread and cheese before me, took my staff, and placed it in a corner, and desired me to eat for I was welcome. The old couple shook me by the hand, and called me by the endearing name of son; I dropped on my knees, and asked their blessing, which they instantly gave me, and I felt the immediate effect of it in my heart. "Oh! said I, "it is Providence that conducted my wandering foot to this peaceful abode." "My son," said the old man, "thou art welcome to remain as long as you please beneath my humble roof. This is my only daughter, she has tasted the cup of affliction; nay, she has drunk deep of it; but God is good." He saw by my looks how these words affected me; and he rose from his seat and embraced me. As soon as my words found utterance, I said, "I have one sister, but now I have two equally dear to me." I then threw my arms round the young woman, and wept on her neck. As soon as the silver moon shot her beams through the

laticed window, we encircled the smiling hearth, and I told them my history. The old man in return said, "It is needless to tell you mine; what is past is past; suffice it to say, that I have struggled with adversities; but in the midst of every trying scene, I preserved my character; but I cannot pass over my daughter, my child, my only comfort on this side the grave. I brought her up in the paths of virtue; and, thank heaven, no temptation, even to this moment, could divert her steps out of that path; for the ways of vice lead to death, but the ways of virtue to everlasting life."

The son of a wealthy man in this country used to call sometimes at my cottage, in order, as he said, to converse with me on the plough: but, at the time he was talking to me with his tongue, he was talking to my young and innocent child with his eyes; and why should I blame my child, he deceived me with his tongue, for it dropped manna. In short, he engaged my poor Fanny's heart, and the nuptial day was appointed; I only wished that he was as poor as my child; but she was not poor, her dowry was beyond the price of diamonds; it was chastity, it was innocence. Well, as I told you, the day

was appointed, when a fine lady from the city made her appearance at our little country church, showered with jewels, so as to attract even the eyes of devotion.—The young squire saw her, and in a few days they were married; as a Christian and a man, I wished them happy; but poor Fanny pined in thought, and I was afraid I should live to close those eyes that should weep over mine in the arms of death. I wished the squire and his bride, as I have already said, as a man and a Christian, all the happiness this world could afford; but I wished it in vain. Sleep will tame the ravenous wolf, and the blood-thirsty tiger, but it could not tame his conscience; for, though he lay on a bed of down, he used to start in his slumbers; rise out of bed and walk through the room, till at length he fell into a state of distraction, and died raving mad. His young widow soon after married the footman, and I know not what became of her; in fact, I never enquired.” I passed my time very agreeably in the company of the old man and his daughter. I was charmed with his conversation. He made great allowances for the flames and frailties of love and youth. In short, he treated me as an indulgent father

would treat his only son. Whilst I am now speaking, he and Fanny are thinking of me. I think I see Fanny at the door, watching for my return. Oh, Fanny, I can never forget you!

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
HARRY.

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THE day on which we parted, the sun shone bright, the sky was blue, and the birds swelled the very bushes with melody as I walked. I had gone about three miles when I was overtaken by a young man, who immediately entered into conversation with me. He was the son of a widow; he had two sisters, but he had not seen either of them for two years; he spoke with such affection and tenderness of them that I was charmed with him. He presented me to his aged mother and his two youthful sisters. I looked at the good old mother, and thought of my own; I looked at

each of the sisters, and I thought of my own; they looked on me and wept, as if they knew what I was thinking of. There is something so affecting and tender in the very phrase of the widow's only son, that the neighbours flocked to congratulate the widow on the safe return of her son; and among the rest the parish schoolmaster, who had first led his infant steps through the humble paths of learning. I fell into conversation with the schoolmaster, and after a pause, he said to me, "Young man, you can assist me in my little seminary, and I shall reward you as far as lies in my power. I accepted the proposal. When he, Mr. Waller, took his place in the school, there was no terror in his countenance, nor stern authority in his voice. When school was over, we used to retire to a bower that he had twined with his own hands. In this calm retreat I enjoyed the unspeakable pleasure of listening to his conversation; and, in order to raise my thoughts above the smoke and din of earth, he used always to begin with heaven, and sometimes, at a humble distance, he would presume to raise his eye to that ineffable Being, who sits enthroned in uncreated light, and having wandered through countless myriads of rolling



spheres, we then returned to talk of those arts that boast celestial origin, the invention of letters, mathematics, &c. The husbandman rose with joy in the morning to mark the vernal progress of his bladed grass; but a great drought fell upon the land, and the rivers, that a few weeks before overflowed their mounds, scarce murmured over the polished pebbles. The flowery race withered in the shade. It was now that an ungrateful people began to reflect on the goodness of Providence, and called on heaven for rain; but this was not all; as if the treasured wrath of heaven was not exhausted, it descended on the rushing wings of hail and snow. The very water falls were arrested in their prone career, and stood congealed. The fowls of the air forgot the tyranny of man, and winged their feeble flight to his abode in vain. The toilsome ox, of honest front, hung with dejected head over his empty crib, and the faithful dog expired at his master's feet. Pressed by that unrelenting tyrant, hunger, some were driven to feed on the roots of certain plants. The price was life, it was a costly feast. Heaven at length in pity sent relief; a person arrived, and in a feeble voice, announced the joyful tidings that he had seen some

ships at a distance, pressing for the port, with out-spread wings; every one that was able to walk went to the sea-side; never did I behold so pleasing a sight; the very vessels seemed to sympathize with our distress; even at a distance you could trace their foaming course through mountains of waves. 'This was a race worth seeing, it was a race in the cause of humanity, on the liquid plain, and the first vessel that entered the port fired a gun that was music to every ear, and revived every heart. 'The rich and the poor dined together, and the voice of gratitude ascended to heaven on the wings of devotion.

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
DICKY.

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I NEED not say with what a sorrowful heart we parted; but it is pleasant to remember our sorrows in the moment of joy. Let me stop a minute. I walked on; I sat

down on a little green bank, and when I had rested myself, I walked on for the space of six or seven miles; I felt myself so tired, that I threw my wearied limbs under a tree, and when I had recovered my strength a little, I felt an inclination to eat, but found that I had lost my scrip, probably where I sat down last. "Never mind," said I, "perhaps it will fall to the lot of some one that wants it more than I." I cannot say that I recollect any thing that happened worth relating, until the third day, when I was overtaken by a man on horseback; he rode by, and then stopped his horse, I came up to him, when he thus addressed me: "Young man, I perceive you are tired, and you appear, by your dusty feet, to have travelled a good deal; you are bound for the village, I suppose; now as you are tired of walking, and I am tired of riding, mount my horse, and when you come into the village, enquire for Thomas Edwards; every one knows me: I am going to see my sister, and to console her if I can; for it has pleased heaven to visit my dear, my only sister." Here he wept, alighted from his horse, put the bridle into my hand, and held the stirrup. I attempted to speak, but he walked off. As he entrusted one

of the noblest animals in the creation to my care, I rode very slowly, and when I came to the village the first person I met told me where I might find Mr. Edwards. I rode up to his sister's; a young man immediately took the horse and Mr. Edwards took me into a little back parlour, where I was very sensibly moved with the sight of a baby reposing in its cradle in the cold sleep of death, with a smile on its countenance. The tender mother leaned over it, and waked a beauty with every tear that she dropped on the cheek of the little cherub. Oh, if innocence and beauty could have shielded off the dart of death; but, oh, what a troublesome world we have to pass through! I was invited to stay with this worthy family as long as I pleased. You know I was always fond of gardening; I thought I could not make a more grateful return for so much kindness, than in laying out the garden, which was rather extensive. The family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Green; they had interchanged vows at an early period of life, and I think I never knew so happy a pair; two little boys and a girl, a servant maid, and a boy that waited at table. After I had been near ten months in the family, Mrs. Green fell ill; she was ordered

by her physicians to try the benefit of the salt waters; a fortnight after her departure I caught a cold one evening in the garden, which brought on a fever. Sally, the maid, attended me, and cooled my parched lips by day and by night. I was given over by the doctor, but it pleased Heaven to permit me to see you all once more, and also to indulge me with another wish, and that was, that Sally should not take the fever, as she was the only daughter of an old couple in the neighbourhood. A few days previous to my departure, I was happy to hear that Mrs. Green was considerably recovered. I wrote a letter to her and her worthy husband, in which I poured forth my gratitude in all the artless language of my heart, and promised to return as soon as I had fulfilled my engagement. I saved some money in the service of my amiable master and mistress, and lest I should be robbed of it on the road, I divided it with Sally, and her aged parents, and assumed my old dress. I took leave of Sally; she stood silent, and followed me with her eyes; but I hope, in a short time, to see them all again.



THE  
HISTORY OF  
DAN.

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THE never-to-be forgotten day that I parted with my dear brothers, I walked on I know not how far, with a heavy heart; I thought of you all;—but Willy's image was still present to my imagination.— Sometimes I thought I saw him walking before me, and sometimes I stretched out my hand to lead him off the flinty road to a green. I thought I heard the sound of a horseman behind me; I looked about, and saw a man riding so furiously, that my heart began to tremble, for I began to think he was in pursuit of me. In a short time he came up to me, drew in his rein, and entered into the following conversation with me :

*Horseman.* You seem to be tired, young man; have you travelled far ?

*Dan.* I am tired in truth, Sir, and yet I can't say that I have travelled very far

*Horseman.* What, are you tired of the world, or tired of your journey?

*Dan.* I can't say that I am tired of the world, though undoubtedly I have not tasted much of its sweets, that is, what is falsely called the pleasures of it, but I am content, and grateful to heaven for all its blessings—I am content with the cup.

*Horseman.* Why, it is impossible you can taste its pleasures without money; gold and silver are the very nerves of pleasure; money can purchase every happiness on earth.

*Dan.* Can money purchase health, Sir, which is one of the greatest blessings on this side of the grave?

*Horseman.* No, but it can purchase costly furniture, beds of down, stately horses, and carriages.

*Dan.* But sumptuous furniture will only feed the eye, and a guilty conscience, or troubled mind can't sleep on a bed of down and if sleep by chance should come, it is only to lead on horrid dreams, the stately horse may throw his rider; and if he flies ever so fast with his master, care will follow, and prey upon his heart.

*Horseman.* You have got all these fine words out of some old books, written by some rusty parson;—remember, young

man, there is nothing like money; it commands respect, it commands power;—I know it does, I am now in pursuit of it, so that I cannot lose my time talking to you. Off he flew!—He was out of sight in an instant, I cast my eye to the road, and saw a venerable old man standing before me, leaning on his staff.

*Dan.* Why, father, as I was walking slowly along, I was overtaken by an old gentleman dressed in blue, mounted on an old grey horse, which had carried him many a mile perhaps, but his services were forgotten, for he spurred the poor animal without mercy.

*Old Man.* I know him very well; yes, you can soon judge of a man from the manner in which he treats his horse; if he is kind to him, you may trust that man, but if he is not, do not trust him; that was Mr. Taylor; he talked to you, I suppose, about money.

*Dan.* Yes.

*Old Man.* Aye, that is his constant theme.

*Dan.* He seemed to think that money can procure every blessing on earth, costly furniture, downy beds, respect and power.

*Old Man.* Unhappy wretch! I would not exchange situations with him for the

universe; he calls for music when the cries of the widow and orphan fill his ears. But let us turn to a better subject: my brother lives on the top of that hill; I am going to pay him a visit; he is old, he never married, he is legs to the lame, and eyes to the blind; I have six children—he has reared and educated them as his own; I can't tell you the love they have for him, and instead of being jealous of that affection, I am so highly pleased with it, that it is not in the power of words to tell it.

*Dan.* Oh, thank Heaven! there are good men in the world; it must be a dark night indeed in which we don't see one star. The tears started in my eyes; the venerable old man clasped me to his bosom: "Lean on it," said he, "it's not a reed, it won't pierce you." I told him my little story as we walked along; he was deeply affected with it, but his tears were reserved for Willy. "My poor child," said he, "I wish he were here, like an old withered oak-tree I should shield him from the inclement blast of misfortune." He introduced me to his brother in these words: "My dear brother, it is known that in travelling along we often find precious things, such as a diamond or a pearl, but in coming along this day, I found

something more precious than a diamond or a pearl—I found an innocent young man, an affectionate brother, a good and dutiful son, and this is he,” presenting me to his brother, who received me with open arms. Such brothers—such affection, I thought I was in heaven; nay, I was, for God is omnipresent. I was treated with so much indulgence, so much kindness, that you’ll excuse these tears. I must return, we must all live and die together; we must all become one family.

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
FRANK.

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I NEED not recal to your memories the tears we shed on parting; but yet it is pleasant to reflect on it, now that it is past! If I had walked on at any other time, I should have enjoyed the beauty of the prospect, for the verdant trees waved on every side; the birds sung so sweet,



and the waters flowed over the most beautiful polished pebbles I ever saw; I heard the lowing of cattle at a distance, which raised my spirits more than all, because I expected that I should soon come to some house, or meet with some human being. I could not meet with a trace of a plough. "Alas!" said I, "I am afraid I shall meet with no employment in this country, for the plough furnishes employment to thousands; the harrow, the sickle, and the flail, wait on it; but what can be more pleasant than a pastoral life! Then I can course with my faithful dog, and sooth my mind with my oaten reed. At length I saw a flock of sheep; I looked round for the shepherd; he saw me first, and called to me; tired as I was I ran to him; he brought me into his little hut, and treated me with some curds and whey; then we sat on a bank, and before he entered into conversation, he applied his pipe to his lips, and played some tunes on it with such skill, that my heart was quite charmed. We then began to discourse.

*Shepherd.* You will be surprised when I tell you, that this country, for many miles round, belongs to four wealthy squires; they have taken the whole into

their own hands, and turned those fruitful lands and valleys into pasturage. You see that vale on your right hand. I remember, in the pleasant month of June, that it waved with verdant corn; but I have lived to see strange things. All around you, some years ago, was thickly sown with neat little cottages, but now they are all in ruins, nay, some of them are even covered with grass.

*Frank.* And what became of the inhabitants?

*Shepherd.* Some of them are now resting from their labours in that little churchyard at the top of the hill, and the rest fled to other countries. Come along with me, it gives me a pleasure to trace the remains of our little cots. This is the little straw-built shed I was born in: you see it is mouldering into dust; even that dust is dearer to me than the most precious that was ever brought from India. I planted this tree with my own hands, in hopes, in my old days, that I should sit under its shade, and perhaps teach my grand-children their catechism; but it pleased Providence—(here he wept.)—Let us change the subject. You tell me you are a poor man's son, like myself, and brought up to industry. Ah, the poor

peasant with a hard hand and a soft heart.

*Frank.* Yes, I was brought up to industry, and in the fear and love of God! these hands are all my fortune.

*Shepherd.* This pipe, this dog, and my hook, are my all; but I am content!—What work were you chiefly brought up to?

*Frank.* I can reap, thresh, and hold the plough.

*Shepherd.* Aye, but the plough is banished from this part of the country; if you choose to stay with me, I'll divide my scrip with you.

*Frank.* I can't think of being a burthen to you; I am willing to work—I am impatient to get work.

*Shepherd.* At all events you must come home with me, and pass this night with me and my little family.

Accordingly, when he had penned his fold, I walked home with him: his wife and children came to the door to receive us. After supper, we sat by the fire and talked a full hour away, and we then retired to rest, and though I lay on a bed of new-mown rushes, yet I thought I lay on a bed of roses. I stayed three or four days with the simple honest shepherd,

and took my leave of the family with a heart almost as heavy as I took leave of you all, that parting opened my wounds, and they bled afresh. I set out, and traversed a fine country indeed; I was thinking of so many things, that I did not perceive the time passing away, so that the sun was just setting. I saw a village at a distance; I hastened my steps, in order to get to it before it was dark, but the night came on, and I lost sight of it. I laid myself down at the foot of a tree till next morning. As soon as I opened my eyes, the sun shone mildly on me, and I returned thanks to that Divine Being that first bade it shine. I looked about, but could not find my hat or scrip; I was quite wet, and so weak that I could not move; I raised myself up a little, and leaned my head against the tree. In this situation an old man came up to me, and having leaned on his staff over me, without saying a word, he went away. I called after him in a faint voice, but he only turned round and waved his hand. "Oh, man, (said I) how cruel art thou!" In a few moments he returned again, pulled a bottle out of his pocket, and put it to my lips. It was a fine cordial, it soon revived my spirits. I leaned on his arm. What

a picture! feeble youth leaning on feeble age. Thus we walked slowly along till we came to his cottage, which was at a little distance; his family gathered round me, and administered every comfort in their power; they made me go to bed, and dried my clothes. Oh! if I live, I shall repay their friendship, humanity, and kindness ten-fold! (a hundred-fold! cried Jack.) I told them, without the least reserve, who I was, whence I came, and all that had befallen me. When I had finished my little history, the old man addressed me thus: "Be of good cheer, my child, Heaven has blessings in store for you yet; I am glad you are come to this part of the country; you will find one friend in it. Your youth, your countenance, your distress, and honesty, will recommend you to him; he is a gentleman. Don't think I mean one of your fine gentlemen: he has lived in this place about three years; he is related to some of the first families in the kingdom; he has been treated ill, they say, by mankind, but he is not an enemy to them on that account, for he is doing good every day, but he does it in so private a manner, that it falls like the dews of Heaven when you are there: and yet I am told his fortune is small, but it is like the widow's cruse of



oil in scripture. How often have I seen him walk along and smile at the prospect of a fine harvest, as if all the grain was to be gathered in his own barn; he sees no company, but his door is open to the poor; I'll wait on him." He did so; and the next day he led me to his house. The moment I approached him he took me by the hand, and I saw the tear steal down his cheeks. Every thing was so neatly arranged in his house, that I thought it was impossible so much beauty could arise from the disposition of even the meanest articles of furniture, for there were no gaudy carpets, or silver side-boards; but his library, in this respect, was the handsomest I ever saw; you would imagine that the Muses had arranged all the Poets. Every thing that he spoke was as well digested as his books, and nature had blessed him with that happiness of expression, that even a plough-boy would remember every word that dropped from his tongue. Heavens! how his veins would swell with indignation when he heard of the proud oppressor or the insolent purse-proud upstart. His greatest wish seemed to be, to leave the world not worse than he found it. He taught me to read with profit and delight, he pointed out the best passages in the best writers; he read my gratitude in my eyes; that was

enough, he looked for no other reward; birth, fortune, connexion, and education, had dazzled his youthful eyes, but reflection and sound philosophy prevailed on him at last to escape from the world, and to converse with himself and his books. The world, after all, was not able to sour his temper, and instead of watching to avenge himself on man, he only watched to render him every service in his power; in short, he was a good man and a good Christian, that looked for rewards and punishments beyond the grave. Never was there so indulgent a master. I read to him at times when his eyes were too weak to read himself, and sometimes I worked a little in the garden; he knew that I promised to meet you on such a day; and a few days before I set out for that purpose, he gave me a new suit of clothes and two guineas. I tied all in a handkerchief, and thought it best to walk in my old clothes; but on my way I happened to call at a little house for some refreshment, where I forgot my bundle and did not recollect it till it was too late; but on my return I expect the people will have honesty enough to give it to me, for I promised to return and let them know all that happened; and, oh! how he will be rejoiced at the news!

THE  
HISTORY OF  
GEORGY.

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THE sorrowful day of our parting I walked I know not how far, for my mind was filled with grief, and my eyes with tears. I thought I heard Willy's sobs and sighs in my ears all the way as I went; I saw some houses, but as they were at some distance from the road I did not go to any one of them, as I thought them all too fine to admit the like of me. The approach of night, however, began to frighten me; I sat down under a hedge to rest myself a little, and to think of what was best to be done. Whilst I was in this situation, an old woman came with a pitcher to draw some water from a well that was near the place where I sat; she looked at me as she was passing. I said to her, as I saw she was very old and feeble, "Mother, you had better let me carry that pitcher, I think I am younger and stronger than you; besides I reverence old age."

*Old Woman.* I thank you my son, I feel myself very weak indeed, but you seem to be tired yourself; have you travelled far?

*Georgy.* I really can't tell how far I have travelled.

*Old Woman.* How far do you intend to travel?

*Georgy.* I really can't tell, I am looking out for some work.

*Old Woman.* Were you bred to any trade?

*Georgy.* No, I was bred to the plough, I can thresh, reap, and hedge.

*Old Woman.* Can you thatch?

*Georgy.* I am not a very good hand at it.

*Old Woman.* Oh, my son, what brought you to this part of the country?

*Georgy.* Distress!—(*The Old woman shook her head.*)

*Old Woman.* I am a poor widow, with one daughter, the support of my old age; but she is now ill of a fever, and I came for that pitcher of water to cool her lips. If you are not afraid of catching the fever, come home with me, and rest yourself beneath my humble roof:—my fare is homely, but you shall be welcome to partake of it! I thanked her:—her little cottage was shaded by an aged thorn; everything

however, was so neatly arranged in it, that she brought my mother to my remembrance. I happened to have some apples, and I roasted them on the hearth for her daughter ; she had scarce tasted one of them, when she said “ I think I feel myself better, that apple has done me good ; ” and the next morning I was happy to hear that the fever had abated. I sought for some cooling herbs, and made a diet-drink of them, which soon restored her to health. I took my leave of both, and a tender parting it was ; I promised, however, to call again if any good luck should befall me. I walked on till I came within sight of a village. I looked, (as I thought I heard a noise) when I saw a little dog within a few yards of me ; I sat down to rest myself, when the poor animal came and fawned on me ; I opened the scrip, and we dined together, or rather supped, for the shades of night began to fall ; I wanted to get rid of the poor dog, and yet I didn't want to get rid of him ; for said I to myself, “ How do I know but this poor animal is a stranger as well as myself ? How do I know that he has a house or home to go to ? But he has fixed on a poor helpless master.” When I had rested myself a little, I set forward



with my little fellow-traveller; with much ado I got to the top of a hill; I looked round and round again, but saw no house; as I didn't like to travel, by night, I slipped into a little valley, and threw myself down on a mossy bed; the dog lay at my head, and there we rested till the welcome beams of the sun played about us the next morning. I then walked till I came to a farmhouse; I met the farmer at the gate. I asked him if he had any work? he told me, if I would call in a fortnight, that he would have some hedging, but that I must not look for high wages. I told him I would leave it all to himself, but that a fortnight was a long time to be out of work, and that I would gladly do any thing in the interval for my board; he told me he had nothing to do in the interval, as his own sons were equal to any thing to be done in that space. He led me in, and ordered some bread and ale to be laid before me; I took this very kind, as my provisions were almost out; he asked me if the dog belonged to me? I told him that the good-natured animal followed me. "But my opinion is," said he, "you stole him, for this country is full of dog thieves, and I'll take care before you go that you shall give an account of your-

self and the dog too. I'll bring you before Justice Handcock." I was very nigh fainting;—supported by my innocence, however, I told him that I was very ready to give an account of myself and the dog, on which he seized me by the collar, and locked me up in a room. I heard his wife say, "let the poor fellow alone." To which he answered, "I know he is innocent, but it will be a fine present for Miss Handcock, and the squire will like me for taking notice of these things." I can't tell you what I suffered; at length he came to me, and said, "Are you willing to part with the dog?" I assured him that I had told him nothing but the truth, and though I was extremely unwilling to part with the faithful creature, yet I found less reluctance as I understood it was intended as a present for the squire's daughter.—"Then," said he, "you may go about your business." Accordingly I walked on, but so terrified, that it was some time before I could recollect myself; the rustling of a leaf frightened me, for I thought the whole parish was in pursuit of me.—Sometimes fear added wings to my feet, and then I ran; then paused and listened like a hare pursued by a pack of hounds; at length I ventured to look behind me,

when lo ! behold the first object that struck me was the dog, in full pursuit of me ! the sight of the animal arrested my steps ; he cried, whined, and howled, as if he knew all that passed, and wished to tell me that he knew it ; “ Well then,” said I, “ Tobit, we shall rise or fall with each other ! ”—Scarce had I articulated these words, when a young fellow, mounted on a fine horse, rode up to me.

*Young Man.* That’s a pretty dog.

*Georgy.* Yes, Sir.

*[I then recounted the history of myself and the dog in as few words as possible.]*

*Young Man.* So that old rascal, farmer Tonson, wanted to rob you of your dog, and yourself of your felicity and character ; as he took the law into his own hands, I’ll take the law into my hands, and I’ll horsewhip him in less than ten hours. He is the lick-spittle of the squire, but I’ll let the parish know that neither he nor the squire shall rule this county ; here, get on this horse, and come home with me ; you shan’t want while I have a shilling, and thank heaven, I am not likely to want one ! He insisted on my getting up, and conversed with me in so kind a manner as we went along, that I was quite charmed with him. He was in mourning

for the best of fathers, the delight of all that approached him ; and his son, his only son, trod in his steps ; he took me to his mother's room, and desired me to tell her my little story. The good old woman beckoned to her son ; he fell on his knees, she kissed him, kissed me, wept over us both, and patted the dog : the dog looked up in her face. Mr. Bundell, (for that was the gentleman's name) the sworn foe of tyranny and oppression, avenged my wrongs, not through malice, not through envy, but through that generous indignation that rises to a spring tide, when the pimp, the pander, the lick-spittle, and the petty tyrant would attempt to tread down the children of innocence and worth beneath their feet. I hope soon to see him again. May he live long, for the sake of humanity !

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
GOEY.

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I CAN'T describe what I felt the day that we parted. I paused, I stopp'd, I

looked round, I prayed, and I felt consolation. "Why should I weep?" said I, "am I not in the presence of God the Father? The kind Father, too, and Protector of all. But poor Willy, yet why should I weep for him? Surely I have read in the best of books, that God feeds the young ravens." The road was rough, and as my shoes were bad, my feet soon became sore. I saw a path. "Well," said I, "there is a soft path, but it may be like the path that my brother Jack told me of, that leads to vice; no, let me tread this flinty one, and though my feet should bleed in the end, perhaps, like the road to virtue, it may lead to happiness." I recollected most of all the good things that I had heard from the curate; nay, I thought I saw him walking before me, with his fine grey hairs, and encouraging me to follow him. I met two men, one of them passed by me without speaking to me, and I was not sorry for it, for I did not like his countenance; the other, however, spoke to me, made me sit down on a bank, pulled out his needle and thread (for he told me he was a tailor,) and he stitched my shoe: he comforted me; nay, there was comfort in his very looks, and when he was parting with me, he put two-pence in my hand and a slice of bread.



I was unwilling to take it, but he insisted on it. "You are a stripling," said he; "you are in a strange country!" These words opened all my wounds afresh, but he snatched me to his breast. "Be comforted," said he, "Providence is your guide, and the best guide you can have too. Providence will protect your tender years!" I wish I may live to meet him again, I should soon recollect him; for there was something in his face so like the curate's, that I shall never forget him. I walked on till the evening came; I overtook a man, who was very inquisitive. I answered every question as well as I could; he seemed to take great pity on me, and lamented my youth and inexperience. "You are too weak," said he, "for any thing of strong work, you are only fit to herd sheep, or to drive the plough." I told him that I was willing to do any thing, and that as I was used to labour almost from my infancy, I could endure more hardships than he thought. The night-dew now fell, the sky was quite dark, and it rained so heavily, that I was quite wet, for my clothing you know was thin. At length I thought I saw a light. "What light is that?" said I. "The light of a candle," said he. "Is it far off?" "No," said he, "it comes

from my window." I was glad to hear it, for surely, said I, this good man will let me shelter myself under his roof this night, and how acceptable would it be to me, for I was tired and wet; however, when we came to his door, he wished me a good night, and told me, if I walked about half a mile forward, I should come to a public house; at length I came to it. I entered and saw five or six men in a room drinking some ale. The landlady asked what I wanted? I told her I would give her tenpence for a bed, which was all the money I had; she desired me to walk out, and called me a poor shabby fellow. One of the men started up, and said. "The youth shall not be turned out; he shall drink as I drink, he shall eat as I eat, and he shall sleep as I sleep!" He was as good as his word, for he took me home to his house, and introduced me thus to his family:—"Here," said he to his wife, "you brought me many sons, I have now brought you one." "He is welcome," said she; on which she embraced me. "Here," said he to his four sons and three daughters, "welcome your brother." They all flocked round me; in short, I thought you were all about me. Oh, how I love them!

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
MATT.

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THE sorrowful day of our parting I travelled, and found the road was so very bad, that it was scarce passable in many places; I lost one of my shoes in a slough, so that I was obliged to betake myself to a wood, in hopes, if I could pass through it, that I might see some house, or meet with some kind person that would guide my footsteps. I had not proceeded far, when I saw a huge snake basking in the sun; at sight of which I fled through brambles and thorns; and thought at every step that I trod upon a snake or a viper; I got out of the wood at last, and threw myself down, quite breathless, on a bank, where I fell asleep. When I awoke, I could scarcely move, the stars shone bright, but I longed for the return of the dawn; the long looked-for dawn at length returned, and the kind heat of the sun revived my drooping spirits. Oh, Heaven, when I reflect on my situation! not a house within my view—not even so much

as the sweet sound of the human voice, and without a morsel to eat. My heart trembles even this moment at the bare recollection—but we should never despair. As I was consulting with myself which way I should take, I thought I heard some one cough; at length I saw a man at a little distance; I ran to him, and told him I was an entire stranger, and almost frozen to death. “Poor fellow,” said he, “you need not tell me what you are; I see hunger, thirst, and sorrow in your countenance.” He took me home to his cottage; his wife also made me eat and drink; and the whole family wept over me at parting; I promised to return again:—how they will rejoice to hear that I met you all in good health, and that Willy is alive and well.

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THE  
HISTORY OF  
NEDDY.

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I HAD not travelled far after our sorrowful parting, when I overtook a gentleman riding slowly on, who looked at me for some time, and then spoke to me.

*Gentleman.* You seem to be a young traveller.

*Neddy.* I am, Sir.

*Gentleman.* You seem to be in trouble.

*Neddy.* My heart is ready to break, Sir.

*Gentleman.* I suppose you have lost either your father or mother.

*Neddy.* I may say, Sir, I have lost both! and more, I have lost eleven brothers and my poor little sister.

I then told my little history, and when I wept the good gentleman wept along with me! "Be comforted, my good boy," said he, "I am going to my steward's; you shall remain at his house, and there rest yourself; in a day or two, perhaps, (if you don't like to be idle,) you may find some employment in the garden, in fair weather. I'll order you some clothes; be a good boy, that is all the return I'll ask for any services that I may render you. The steward is a good, humane man, he will be as kind to you as one of his own children." When we reached the steward's, the good gentleman called him aside and spoke to him some time. The steward then left him, and took me by the hand, set some meat before me himself, and promised that I should have a suit of new clothes the next day. He kept his word.



I returned my hearty thanks to God ; I also prayed for the health and happiness of the good gentleman and all his family ; the steward treated me like one of his own children ; he gave me good books to read : yet, well as I was treated, I thought the day would never come that I was to meet you all at the twelve roads again. The steward came to me one morning, and said, " I suppose, young man, you were not brought up in idleness at home ? " I told him I was not, and that I did not wish to be idle. " Then," said he, " it will amuse you to herd some swine." I answered very cheerfully, that I was ready to do anything he pleased. He then took me into a large field, where I saw a great number of swine ; he counted them over, told me the number, and said, " you must not lose one of those, they belong to the squire, and if you do, he will send you to jail." This last word made me tremble. " You see," continued he, " that little thatched house, you are to sleep in it at night, and a person will bring you your victuals every day ; be a good boy, and here is sixpence." At length an old woman came one day with my dinner ; she gave it to me, and as I spread it on the grass, I observed a tear steal down her withered cheeks ; I

ventured at length to ask her when I might expect to see the squire ? " Poor fellow," said she, " I must not deceive you. Heaven knows when you'll see the face of that excellent man ! his son, his good son, is in a decline, and he is now with him in a foreign country ! Oh if he was not there, that villain, the steward, dare not treat you in this manner ; but he'll make up some story." The good, the tender-hearted old woman came to me every day ; and the morning we parted, she wept over me as if I had been her own son.

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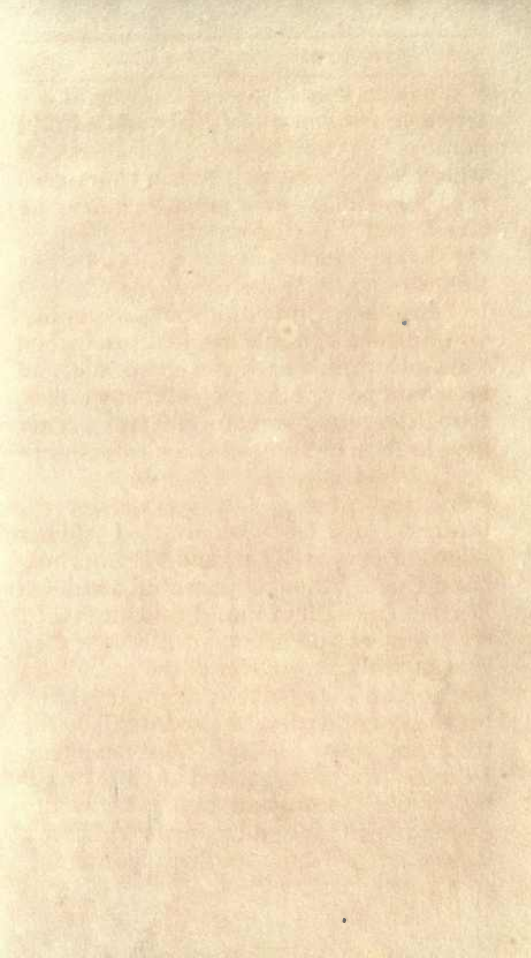
THE  
HISTORY OF  
WILLY.

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THE morning I parted with my dear brother Jack, and all, I thought my eyes would have melted into tears. I saw a house in the fields ; I went towards it, but I thought, when I sat near it, that I heard a dog bark ; I sat under a bush, as there was a shower of rain ; at length I saw a little girl coming from the house with a book under her arm. When she came near enough to speak to me, she said,

“What do you sit there for, little boy? Have you got your task by heart?” I told her that I sat there because I didn’t know where to go. “Why, where is your mammy?” I said my poor mammy was many a mile off. “Then come to my mammy, for we are to have some curds and whey this evening, and I’ll give you my share; I had a brother, a little white-headed boy like you, but then he would’nt speak to me when I kissed him, and his lips were so cold, and he would not speak to my mammy either, though she cried over him, but my mammy says he is in heaven, but I am sure you are he.” While we were talking, her mother came, and when she saw me under the bush, she took me in her arms; I told her all that I could tell her, and when her husband came, I thought he would break his heart at the sight of me: I told him that I was to meet you all on such a day; they sent me within two miles of the place by a waggon, and desired the waggoner to bring me back again; but he used me ill on the road, and when I had got near the place, I quitted the waggon, and knew my road by the old thorn-bush; but I know my poor young daddy and mammy will break their hearts, if I don’t see them soon again.

THE END.







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